Rome 6th Oct. 1873

My dear Maria

Yours of the 2d is so pleasant & so full of good news that I have become suddenly jealous & have "set me down" to see if I cannot come up to it - But when you have nothing to write about you are pleasant & so how that now you have lots of charming things to tell you are splendid

That Tom had got to the Sea & was able to walk about & that he continued his round Lyme &c & was lost in a Photo shop is very delightfull to me - That my Walter had paid you a two hours visit & carried off the family portraits & that Arthur & Joan had written you with the needful in due course & were also about to step in upon you, is almost like my sitting by your side - However as I am able to give you

a good account of myself without any drawback
I know you'll think this something
My being very comfortable with Dr
Valeriani & his family I know will please
you, the ladies are excellent housekeepers &
not at all fashionable —
I beg to assure you that I am clean shaved
every morn by Sage 6 & have never sported a
beard I always wonder what Nature could
mean in putting such an awkward dirty
thing on a mans mouth! When it impedes
the voice & gets the first of the dinner
We have also most divine weather &
I get a ramble every day — & I think I am
picking up every day, tho' I'm not so strong as
I wish but get am able to do 3 miles in a
pleasant place with a good road
I am very idle & more as I get 3 newspapers
every day & I am afraid that I begin to like
the

idleness, but Walter tells me that I need repose & yet I dont require telling

I have been afraid to pay a long promised visit to my f.d Cappelli in the mountains for any thing extraordinary shakes me, but if I go on in my own quiet way I can do wonders altogether I am regarded as a marvel at my age for I still retain my fresh colour & am without a wrinkle, this is more striking as the Romans are very cadaverous & aged

I am glad to tell you that altho' every thing is so dear, yet I keep within my income but being rent free & further providing for you helps me pleasantly —

The Theatre in my house over the Fountain is finished very splendidly & solidly which is another happiness to me as I may (owing to this) never be called on to pay rent again

I retain one large splendid room which serves